

**Background:** The following essay was published *Der Angriff*, 15 August 1927, the newspaper Goebbels founded in Berlin shortly after taking over as the party's leader there. It is an attack on Bernhard Weiss, the Vice President of the Berlin police.

**The source:** "Isidor," *Der Angriff. Aufsätze aus der Kampfzeit* (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP., 1935), pp. 308-310.

# Isidor

by Joseph Goebbels

My name is Hase [*Hase, German for rabbit, but also an ignoramus*]. I live in the forest and don't know anything about anything. I keep out of everything. I am, one might say, politically neutral. When it is to my advantage, I can believe anything, though the facts are best. The facts are mostly wonderful. I am of the opinion that the far right and the far left must be banned. The center, of course, is out of the question. As I said, that's my opinion. I am a realist. That is comfortable, it has few dangers, and one can make a living.

But assume I didn't live in the forest any more, but in China. Some kind of fortune or misfortune has brought me there. Let's assume that. Now that would be terribly unpleasant. For in China, as is well known, everyone is Chinese, even the emperor. I would stand out. My name is Hase, and I look like a German. One would be able to recognize me immediately. Why, even the children would stand stock still in the street and call out "That's Hase."

But I would know what to do. I would grow a long pigtail and stop looking like a German. I would give up my honorable name Schmidt and rename myself "Wukiutschu." That's what I'd do. And if someone still called me "Hase," I would be very angry.

Let's assume, then, that I live in Shanghai and my father still lives in the forest. I wouldn't say anything about the forest to anyone. Just the opposite! I would behave as if we had lived for generations in Shanghai, no matter how much others wanted to doubt it. And then, let's assume that by accident the police chief of Shanghai dies. And that all the Chinese shout "Wukiutschu should be our leader!"

I would then somehow be the police chief of Shanghai. It's nice to be the police chief. One has the power to do what one wants. That is, if others let one get away with it. But they must! If they were dumb enough to say "Wukiutschu should lead us!" then they have to be satisfied with me. And if someone weren't satisfied, I'd take action, since there are always malcontents. I would therefore decree:

"It is forbidden to be dissatisfied!"

## Wukiutschu

And I would rule. I know that it wouldn't be as simple as it looks. For people would come and say:

"What does Wukiutschu want? He isn't even one of our people. Wukiutschu is really named Hase and lives in the forest. He has sneaked in here. We've been here on Chinese soil a thousand years and more. Our fathers made this land livable and defended it with their lives. Back then Wukiutschu still lived in the forest, but now he behaves as if he had always lived here. Down with him! China for the Chinese!"

That would naturally be most unpleasant for me. For if one cut my pigtail off, any child could see that these people were right. But that wouldn't happen. I would be the police chief after all, and as such have a right to respect. So I'd make another decree:

"Whoever calls me Hase is inciting class warfare. I forbid it, under penalty of imprisonment."

## Wukiutschu

Then I would have peace. I would rest in the glory of my office. I'd be fanned by Chinese coolies, receive ocean flyers, and attend every banquet. My pigtail would grow longer and longer, and I would soon forget that I once was named Hase. And the malcontents would die, and then the world would be content.

Only then would life be beautiful and dignified.

I am the pathfinder for that. One only has to know nothing like me in order to believe it firmly and unshakably.

But, as we said, this is all supposition.

For the Chinese would never be dumb enough to believe that I was Wukiutschu and to name me police chief.

Such stupid people don't exist.

It is all nothing but a fairy tale.

I am not Chinese and I don't live in Shanghai. My name isn't Wukiutschu, but Hase.

I live in the forest and don't know anything.

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